



Epping Forest

Registered Charity

Epping Forest Annual Review 2020-2021



Contents

Chairman’s statement	3
Charitable purpose	4
Our vision	4
Our mission	4
Who we are	4
Our history	5
Our strategic aims	5
Our key priorities	5
Performance review of 2020-2021	6
Summary	7
Achievements towards strategic priorities	8
Projects	11
A year in numbers	12
Key Performance Indicators	13
Financial statement	15
Key goals for 2021/2022	17

Cover: Bursting Through. Photo by Chris Shepherd
 Left: Muntjac on the Buffer Lands. Photo by Mark Powter

Chairman's statement

I am pleased to introduce this Annual Review which highlights the huge range of achievements and tasks performed in Epping Forest throughout this most unusual of years.

Almost at no other time in history has the value of open spaces been more apparent, and widely appreciated, than through certainly the first several months of the pandemic. Epping Forest remained open throughout the early days of 'lockdown' whilst neighbouring parks, country parks and estates closed their gates. We received an estimated 1.3 million visitors in a six-week period alone and over the year our usual 4.2 million visits rose to around 11 million.

Staff that were able to work from home did so, but a large number of keyworker staff working on site carried on delivering their duties in the Forest. Like other work places our staff numbers were reduced by shielding, isolating and of course illness, due to the virus, so those at work were absorbing additional duties as well as coping with the huge pressures from the extra visitors. I want to express my enormous gratitude to all the

staff and Committee Members for their hard work, tenacity, flexibility and camaraderie which enabled us to maintain standards and continue to deliver our core objectives.

Out of this adversity there were many positive outcomes. The sobering sight of the temporary mortuary installed at Manor Flats was replaced with a 1.7ha wildflower meadow which now, one year on, is a welcome riot of colour and variety which has helped lift everyone's spirits.

Significantly, the Countryside Stewardship Scheme agreement was concluded, providing essential funding and paving the way for the next ten years of conservation work.

We were all reminded, in a year which saw the wettest February, sunniest spring and record-breaking October rainfall, that our climate is changing. The City Corporation launched their Climate Action Strategy which includes a six-year Carbon Removals project providing funding for major initiatives on our Buffer Lands to improve carbon capture.

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A long-standing intention to commence charging in our car parks was a substantial project over several months culminating in its launch in spring 2021. This scheme addresses longstanding issues of commuter and displacement parking but also seeks to dissuade visitors from using cars to access the Forest helping to address air quality and pollution in some of the most sensitive areas of the Forest. The income will be a welcome addition to the City Corporation's funding to continue to manage and protect the Forest.

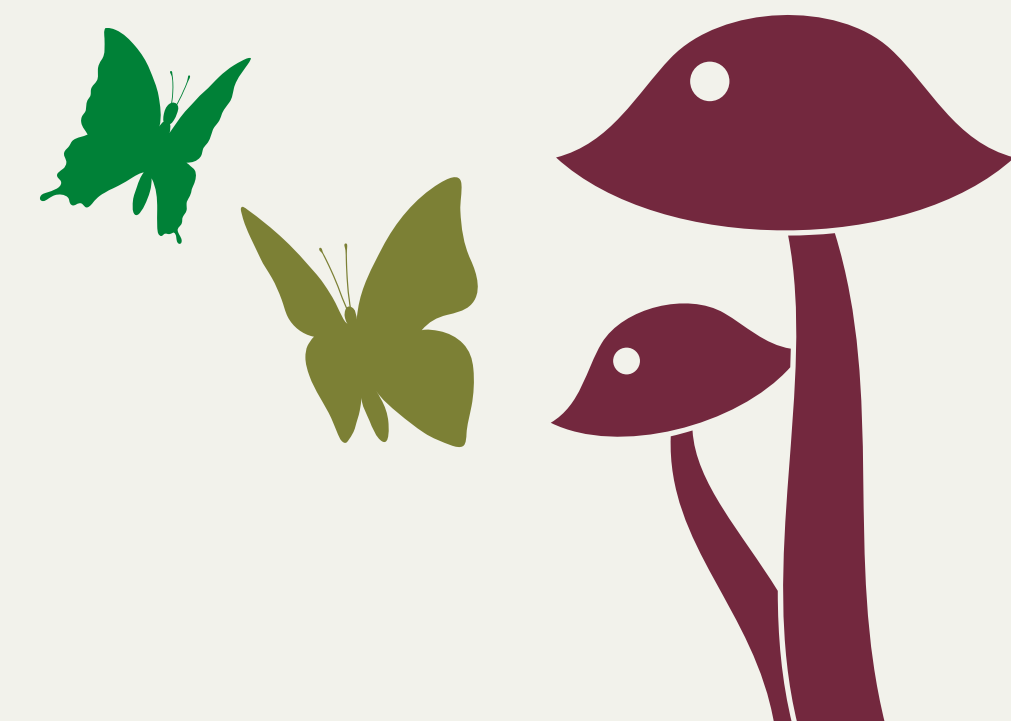
Projects were progressed and we were pleased to secure a £1.7 m commitment from the City Corporation towards new football facilities. Our first holiday let opened, albeit at a difficult time but received rave reviews from its first guests and our bench sponsorship scheme was launched.

In the background lots of work on policy and planning was progressed and detailed management plans for several sites and structures were agreed.

I am delighted that so much progress has been made despite the additional pressures of this pandemic year. I am confident our charity continues to deliver its fundamental purposes of providing public benefit while protecting this special and much-loved Forest so that future generations will also enjoy it.

I look forward to continuing to provide our usual high standards as we progress the ambitious programme for the year ahead.

Graeme Doshi-Smith
Chairman of Epping Forest and Commons Committee



Charitable purpose

The purpose of the charity is the preservation of Epping Forest in perpetuity by the City of London Corporation as Conservators of Epping Forest, as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.

Our vision

Epping Forest is a thriving, biodiverse green space that benefits the City's communities and enhances the wider environment as part of a larger, interconnected landscape.

Our mission

To conserve and protect Epping Forest as London's largest biodiverse green space for the health, recreation and enjoyment of everyone.



Ancient beeches



Wanstead Flats



Who we are

Epping Forest operates as a charitable trust (charity number 232990), which is managed and funded by the City of London Corporation acting as the Conservators of Epping Forest under the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880. Each year the City Corporation provides £4.2 million from its private investments, at no cost to local taxpayers, to support the management of 6,110 acres of Epping Forest and 1779 acres

of Buffer Land which forms London's largest open space.

The Epping Forest and Commons Committee is made up of 12 Members of the City of London Court of Common Council, and four Verderers, the latter elected locally by Epping Forest Commoners every seven years. Together they decide policy and strategy for the Forest, and act as the trustees for the charity.

Our history

Epping Forest was placed in jeopardy by the sale of Royal Forest Rights from 1820 onwards. Given the importance of the Forest to Londoners, the City Corporation supported and funded local opposition to the continuing loss of Epping Forest land to encroachment from residential and commercial development. In 1874, the City Corporation funded and won a landmark court case which prevented the further enclosure of the Forest, and then proceeded to purchase 5,350 acres of the privately-owned Forest for public benefit at a modern-day equivalent cost of £30.4 million.

The City Corporation sought legislation confirming them as the Conservators of Epping Forest in order to manage and regulate London's largest public open space for a range of public benefits including recreational access alongside nature, heritage and landscape conservation.

Epping Forest is now held in perpetuity by the Epping Forest charity to provide a wide range of public benefits from public recreation to nature conservation, with those benefitting from these services termed



Above: Gossiping Rambles in Surburban Essex, Epping Forest and Beyond' by C. W. B Burdett 1911

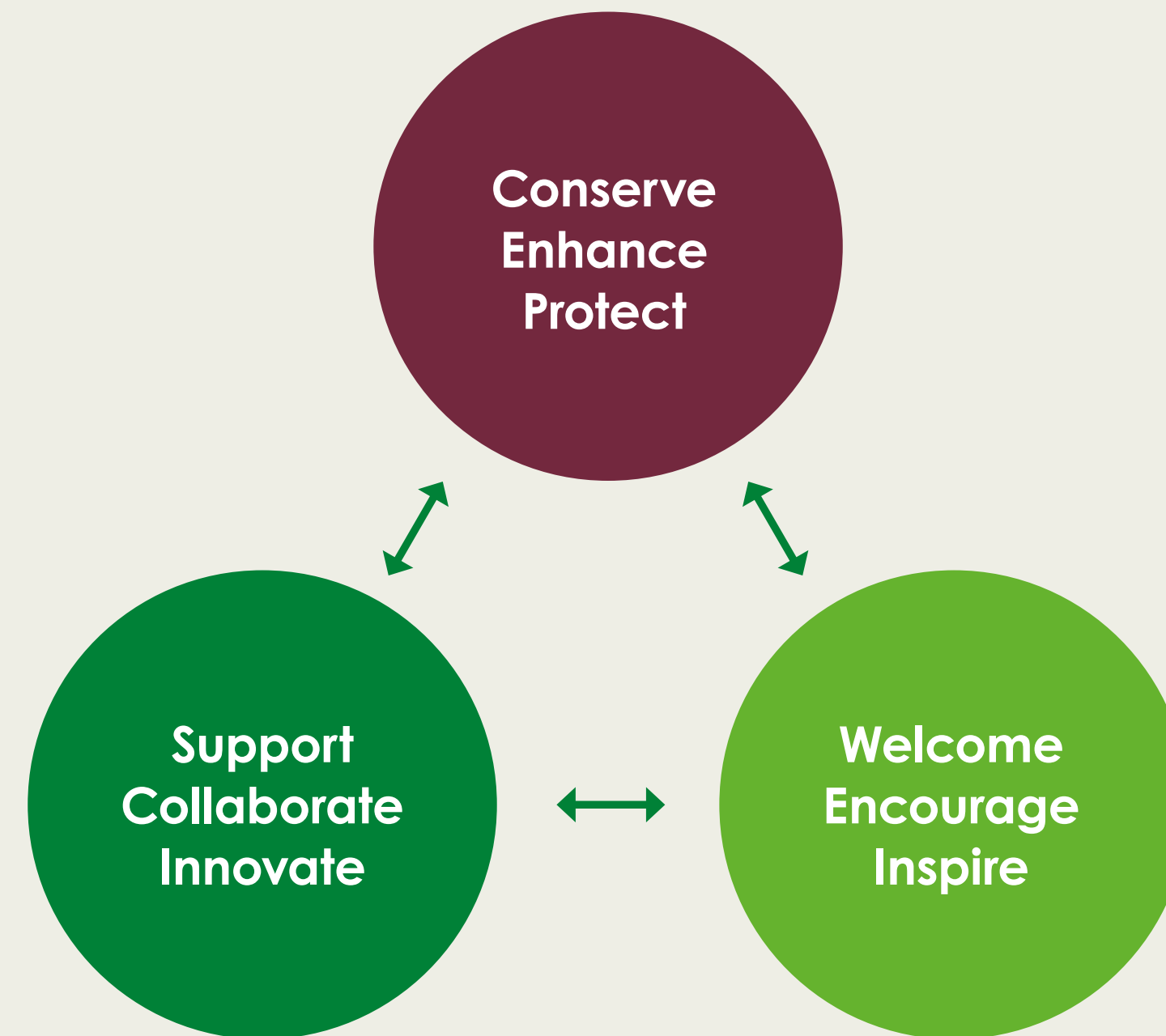
as the charity's beneficiaries. Many people have mistakenly interpreted Queen Victoria's public dedication celebrating the opening of the Forest as a Royal gift to the people, rather than the relinquishment of Royal Hunting Rights and Royal recognition of the City Corporation's purchase and commitment to the Forest. The Forest is therefore not publicly owned and administered but is held for public benefit reflecting both its founding and subsequent national legislation, while being jointly managed by City Corporation Aldermen, Common Councilmen and locally elected Verderers.

Our strategic aims

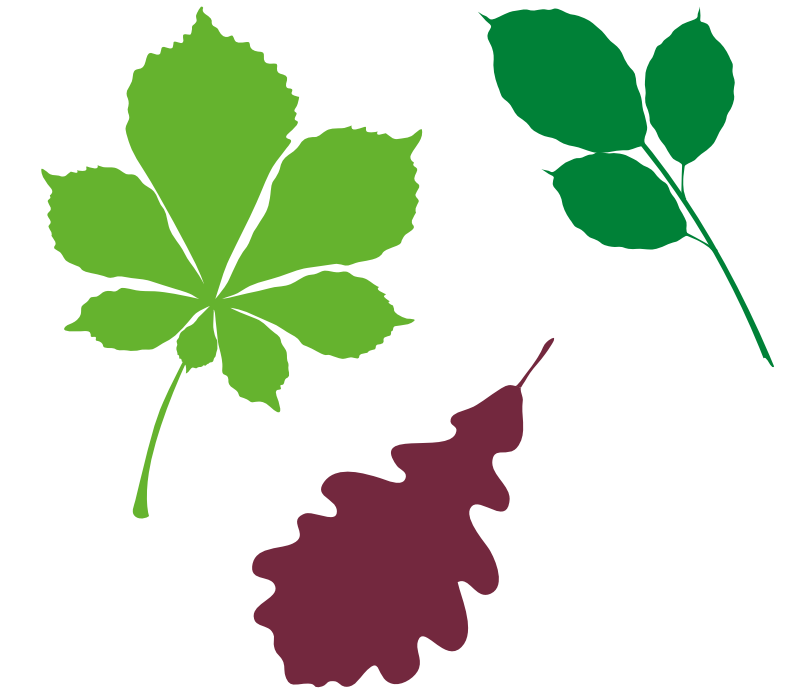
We aim to **conserve, enhance and protect** the Forest's special natural environment and its heritage.

We aim to **welcome, encourage and inspire** our visitors.

We aim to **support, collaborate and innovate**, sustainably managing the Forest for future generations.



Our key priorities



1. A welcoming destination for all
2. A beautiful forest, sustaining an internationally and nationally important mosaic of wildlife habitats
3. An inspiring space benefiting peoples' health and providing opportunities for recreation and enjoyment
4. A range of special heritage landscapes which are protected and celebrated
5. A resilient environment, where challenges are embraced and opportunities explored

Performance review of 2020-2021



Summary

This year the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a refocussing of work to manage the increased visitor pressure on the Forest and a change in working practices.

Visitor pressure increased dramatically from April onwards and throughout 2020, with an average increase in visits of over 200% across all the sites. Visitor numbers are estimated to have reached 11 million across the year.

New signage and other communications were urgently produced for new messages covering issues such as social distancing, parking, litter, codes of conduct and access, with over 1000 temporary new signs displayed throughout the Forest to deal with increased visitor pressure.

During the pandemic, all teams were working with reduced staffing numbers due to shielding and illness, particularly for field-based staff who were unable to fulfil their normal duties due to isolation requirements.

There was a significant increase in visitor complaints via phone, email and social media with staff responding whilst working from home. This resulted in a slower than usual response time and the introduction of a generic email response and use of a more detailed 'out of office' response on email.

The Operations Team were particularly affected by the number of staff who were required to shield at the same time as reacting to the increased visitor numbers by facilitating physical interventions for managing the high

Visitor pressure increased dramatically from April onwards and throughout 2020, with an average increase in visits of over 200% across all the sites. Visitor numbers are estimated to have reached 11 million across the year.



Left: The view from Temple Field, Warlies Park.



with two new campaigns developed to respond to the pandemic, #StayLocalEppingForest and #ThisWeekInTheWoods. The Epping Forest website was constantly updated to reflect the changing guidance for visitors as to how they could safely benefit from Epping Forest.

Staff from closed facilities were also redeployed to litter picking and other duties and later in the year some staff were furloughed. Volunteers were stood down for a while but Volunteer Wardens were re-engaged in September 2020, to help manage the elevated visitor numbers and volunteer litter pick groups once again supported the Litter Team at this time.

Grazing continued albeit with a reduced number of days and cattle were introduced to Wanstead Park for the first time in September 2020.

Nonetheless a huge range of core work, projects and new developments were achieved across this unprecedented year of change.

volume such as signage installation and car park management. This impacted on day-to-day activity and resulted in a backlog of routine maintenance works although essential annual grassland cuts and pollards were completed.

Anti-social behaviour increased along with the visitor numbers and Forest Keepers worked long hours to tackle irresponsible or dangerous parking, spontaneous social gatherings, huge increases in litter and general user conflict.

With visitor centres forced to close, alternative ways to engage the public

were found from pop-up information points at High Beach and Wanstead Park to Covid-secure guided tours of the Iron Age encampments at Loughton Camp and Ambresbury Banks. While golf provision was maintained in-line with government guidance, football staff also helped with litter collection and ground maintenance work.

Moved printed, quarterly magazine to monthly digital magazine to provide timely updates responding to ever-changing pandemic guidelines, and increased social media engagement

Below: the view from Big View



Achievements towards strategic priorities

Strategic priorities	Achievements
1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	The Epping Forest Management Strategy (2020-2030) and an accompanying three-year action/business plan was completed and published.
2, 4, 5	Negotiations on the ten-year Countryside Stewardship Agreement , starting in 2020, was successfully concluded, providing significant long-term financial support for conservation work on the Forest's internationally important habitats.
1, 2	Comprehensive proposals for long-term ('in perpetuity') Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMMS) were approved by Committee/Trustees as a key contribution to negotiations on the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Mitigation Strategy that up to eight local authorities within the SAC's Zone of Influence must put in place as part of their Local Plans. ¹
1, 3, 4	Visitor Codes of Conduct created to help address undesired visitor behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Epping Forest Code of Conduct (countryside) b. Cycling Code of Conduct c. Dog walkers Code of Conduct
1, 3, 4	Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy consulted on, and published.
1, 3, 5	Car Parking Charges Scheme was introduced.
1, 3	Paths Strategy was completed and approved outlining the different types of path in the Forest, the varying management responsibilities, and a phased improvement plan for their management.
1, 3, 4	Internal Communications Strategy completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Due to the pandemic, there was a need for re-focused day-to-day communication, messages to be re-prioritised and signage updated to respond to the demand from visitors and management need.
3	New website launched

Below: Fallow doe



Achievements towards strategic priorities continued

Strategic priorities	Achievements
3	Forest Focus relaunched as monthly e-newsletter – providing more timely information for visitors and removing the need for distribution of physical copies.
1,2	Epping Forest and Commons Committee agreed to formally delegate powers to the Director and Superintendent of Epping Forest to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). Approved in May 2020, this administrative alternative to prosecution before the magistrates' court means that valuable court time is not wasted and allows effective, timely resolution for relevant byelaw breaches of the Epping Forest Act. This is an important step for inclusion in the pending Enforcement Strategy .
1, 2, 5	a. Some Anti-Social Behaviours, previously relatively rare on the Forest, were exacerbated by the public reaction to the UK COVID-19 lockdown. Particularly prevalent and complex to manage were non-COVID compliant large Spontaneous Social Gatherings (SSG).
2, 4, 5	Agreed by Committee, the Deer Management Strategy (2021 – 2031) outlines the management approach for maintaining deer as an 'ornament on the Forest' as per the statutory duties in the Epping Forest Act.
5	The Epping Forest Emergency Response Plan was tested. The plan has been developed to fit in with the nationally recognised JESIP (Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme) framework. This provides a standard approach to multi-agency working when responding to major incidents. Of course, the COVID-19 pandemic proved a good test of the plan such as the multi-agency incident response to the SSG's. It has also proved valuable for recent small-scale wildfire management.
2, 5	a. Wildfire site plans were completed for all Essex heathland sites within the SAC/SSSI and issued to Essex Fire & Rescue Service (Essex FRS). Plans were also completed for Leyton Flats, Gilberts Slade and Wanstead Flats and accepted, as issued, by London Fire Brigade (LFB). LFB and Essex FRS 'sign off' visits granting final approval of plans delayed due to the pandemic.
5	b. All staff have undertaken ACT (Action Counters Terrorism) training and Fire Awareness.
2	A draft Grazing Strategy was used to gain an external grant of £15,000 awarded for a new GPS-based Invisible fencing system.
1, 2, 3, 5	Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Mitigation Framework developments;
1, 2	a. SAC Mitigation Oversight Group recommenced with SAMMS and financial tariffs proposed.
1, 2	b. London Borough Waltham Forest and Epping Forest District Council SANGS (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) Strategies were modified and enhanced to better support the Forest as a result of negotiations throughout the year.
1, 2	c. Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy was approved by EFDC in Feb 2021 following our amendments.
2, 4	Phase one of the Grassland and Heathland Gazetteer was completed – all 38 Forest compartments are now fully mapped on ArcGIS with all grassland polygons recorded and categorised as conservation, amenity or sports use.

Below: Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge



Achievements towards strategic priorities continued

Strategic priorities	Achievements
2, 5	Annual Ramorum survey of rhododendron was completed. Strict biosecurity measures remain in place at Warren Plantation (Compartment 15) to try to prevent the spread of this disease.
1, 3, 4	Following consultation with key stakeholders, and a review of past management, Integrated Site Plans (ISP) were completed for Hollow Pond, Leyton Flats, Wanstead Flats and High Beach . These identify management issues impacting the different areas and outlines a ten-year management strategy.
3, 4	Village Greens Plans - Improvements were made to the Theydon Green and the Hoppit in the centre of the village.
2, 4, 5	Heritage Master Plan has been progressed with the Parkland Management Plan (Copped Hall) completed.
	Risk Management Framework:
5	a. Financial risk revised upwards during COVID-19 due to loss of income and additional expenditure requirements.
5	b. 36 new subsidence claims and 15 liability claims against the City Corporation were placed during the year.
5	The Epping Forest Bench Sponsorship scheme was launched for those who had previously expressed an interest, with plans for the scheme to be open to all applicants in 2021-22.
5	A new donations page was launched on the website.
5	Epping Forest and Commons Committee agreed licence fees and charges for 2021-22 .
5	Annual Charity Report and Financial Statements (19/20) were submitted to the Charity Commission.
5	A ten-year Fleet and Equipment Plan has been prepared with an emphasis on ensuring the fleet will be compliant for operating within the expanded Ultra Low Emission Zone.
5	Despite the pandemic causing many cancelled training courses, Epping Forest staff completed mandatory or essential courses to ensure professional skills are refreshed and up to date.
1, 4, 5	The Epping Forest and Commons Committee also received reports on wayleaves and tenancies, new consultation policy, new gating measures for High Beach and a three year review of the Consultative Committee.

Projects

Strategic priorities	Achievements
2, 5	As part of the City Corporation's new Climate Action Strategy, approved in October, an outline six-year Carbon Removals project was approved for implementation from April 2021.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>Wanstead Park Project</p> <p>The Grotto Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was prepared. The CMP provides a comprehensive and interdisciplinary evaluation of The Grotto today and a conclusion is that The Grotto is at a turning point in its history. A costed prioritised action plan was prepared which highlighted an essential spend of £57,500 and work on these agreed key actions has commenced.</p>
1, 4	<p>Wanstead Park Water Bodies</p> <p>It was confirmed that water utilities are not contributing to the persistent leakage issues from Ornamental Water. As a result of the 'high risk' status of the lakes a flood study recommended a further assessment into the interaction between the Ornamental Water and the River Roding. This is currently underway and is due for completion in 2021-2022.</p> <p>In partnership with Thames 21, a Wanstead Wetland Project was developed with the aim of improving the biodiversity value of the lakes as part of the wider River Roding catchment. A further aim was to explore the potential of the lakes to intercept and clean through reed bed systems road runoff water before it reaches the River Roding.</p>
3, 5	<p>Wanstead Flats football</p> <p>City Corporation capital funding of £1.7 million was agreed by Resource Allocation Sub-Committee for the Football Development (Parklife) Project.</p>
5	<p>Lodge Refurbishment</p> <p>Refurbishment was completed at Keeper's Cottage Baldwins Hill and the property launched as the first Epping Forest holiday let in autumn 2020.</p>



Above: cattle in Wanstead Park

Case study

Cattle in Wanstead Park

On 17 September 2020 some carefully selected longhorn cows from Epping Forest's 200-strong herd returned to graze Wanstead Park for the first time in 150 years.

The pilot was part of a plan to use cattle to protect Wanstead Park's historic views as well as to restore the acid-grasslands in the area for wildlife conservation, including rare plant species, insects and spiders and saw the cows enjoying Wanstead Park throughout September and October 2020.

A team of volunteers and staff closely monitored the animals' welfare and encouraged visitors to admire but not feed or approach the cattle.

We were delighted to graze our heritage cattle in the east London park, so close to the centre of our capital city, and were pleased with the public response to the trial and how the people of Wanstead embraced the return of the cows. The success of this pilot will see the cows return to Wanstead Park once again in the summer of 2021.

A year in numbers



1 new viewing platform constructed on the lake edge at Highams Park * both delivered in partnership with the Highams Park Planning Group (HPPG).

13

new waymarking finger posts installed



1,037

individual areas of grassland mapped



71 km

of road verge cut (annual highway verge management)



188

Oak processionary moth nests were removed and spraying completed

216

full hectares of conservation and amenity grassland cut

Re-pollarding undertaken on

130

ancient hornbeam pollards



Over

2,200

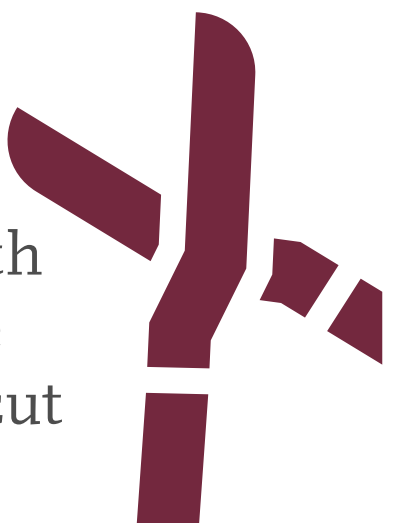
individual ancient tree management plans written

1170

Forest Focus subscribers at the end of the reporting period

80 km

of path verge was cut



858 trees made safe



Grant of

£15,000

awarded for new GPS-based invisible fencing system- for 50 collars



345

hours of formal staff training

4.5 km

of paths widened by cutting back vegetation at Whitehall Plain, Highams Park and Wanstead Park

Key Performance Indicators

Business area	Measure	Strategic objective	Outcome	Data set/s required (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021)	Responsible officer
Financial performance	External income generation as a percentage of total income	5	a) A sustainable and responsive business model. b) Increased and diversified annual income sources and an increase in sponsorship opportunities and partnerships.	38%	Resources Manager
Customer service	Calls to 1010 (including out of hours) and external email responses	5	a) A sustainable and responsive business model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An average of 1000 external calls per month to the main 020 8532 1010 number but with staff working from home, this data cannot be ratified this year. Significant rise experienced. 	Resources Manager
Quality assurance	Quality of visitor experience – achievement of VAQAS and Green Flag	1	a) A high-quality visitor destination that is safe, clean and accessible. 3 d) Epping Forest recognised as a consistently high-quality tourist and visitor attraction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VAQAS retained although no assessment made in 2020 due to COVID-19. Green Flag Award and Green Heritage Site. 	Head of Visitor Services
Customer engagement	Web traffic and social media followers	1	d) An increased volunteer network and an actively and positively engaged wider community. 3 a) Visitors are well informed and directed to more sustainable locations in the Forest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web hits: 254,000. Social Media followers: Twitter: 8,955, FB: 4,164, Instagram: 3,000. Forest Focus subscribers: 1180. 	Head of Visitor Services
Conservation performance	Percentage SSSI/SAC in Favourable Condition and Unfavourable Condition recovering scores	2	a) Favourable conservation of SAC and favourable condition of SSSI secured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38 SSSI recording units. 4 Categories of condition status. Number of units in each category in brackets. Fav Condition (10) 26%, Unfavourable recovering (20) 53%, Unfavourable no change (7) 18%, Unfavourable declining (1) 3%. No change since last year. No Favourable Condition surveys conducted by Natural England (NE) in 2020/21. New Favourable Condition methodology currently under review by NE. 	Head of Conservation
	Extent and distribution of rare species data	2	e) Increased understanding and awareness of Forest's biodiversity importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heath spotted orchid: 71 individuals (40 flowering); an increase from the 56 recorded in 2018 but down from 121 in 2014 and a general declining trend related to wider environmental factors (climate, weather) rather than localised management. Lousewort: –present at all known colonies with one additional, new site found at Fairmead. Heath spotted orchids were censused in detail – the sixth year out of seven of detailed census work. 	Head of Conservation

Key Performance Indicators continued

Business area	Measure	Strategic objective	Outcome	Data set/s required (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021)	Responsible officer
Grazing	Days per calendar year and hectare grazed	2	<p>b) Dynamic wood-pasture and scrub with greater structural diversity and edge habitats restored.</p> <p>d) Establish extensive grazing rotation across central and northern Forest and Buffer Lands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest: 3,262 grazing days across 311 hectares. Buffer Lands: 33,425 grazing days across 195 hectares. Grazing days fell on the Forest in 2020 due to smaller grazing groups due to increase in visitor numbers and several Boviguard wire loops failed to work. The hot dry summer also resulted in less vegetation growth in the summer – especially May and June – compared with previous years of 2018 and 2019 when over 7,500 grazing days were achieved in each year. 	Head of Conservation
Forest protection	Epping Forest SAC Zone of Influence agreed in all local plans	4	a) Epping Forest recognised for its significant conservation and heritage landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAC Zone of influence (Zoi) agreed by eight local authorities and Natural England as at 6.2km. The Sept 2019 Visitor Survey showed a larger Zoi 6.7km . However, the 2017 determined Zoi of 6.2km was agreed as the accepted Zoi perimeter until a further summer survey to be conducted within the next five years. 	Head of Conservation
	Number of planning applications screened and responded to	4	a) Epping Forest recognised for its significant conservation and heritage landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9,006 planning applications were received and screened, 25 responses with objections were made. Two applications received permission. Two applications are on hold pending review Significant: Next PLC Distribution Centre (EFDC), Wellington Hill (six houses) (EFDC), Epping Forest College Site (400+ homes) (EFDC), Fulbourne Road (565 units) (LBWF). 	Head of Conservation
	Percentage of litter and waste recycled and number of fly tips	1	e) Minimise environmental damage through effective litter and waste management.	Annual figure from financial records. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% waste 15% recycle 492 flytips 	Head Forest Keeper
Health and Safety performance	Number and severity of reported accidents	1	a) A high-quality visitor destination that is safe, clean and accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total – 7 accidents with one out of the seven requiring RIDDOR reporting. 	Resources Manager
		5	a) A sustainable, responsive business model.		

Below: The aftermath of a gathering at High Beach



Case study

Covid-19 impact on Epping Forest

One unexpected impact from the COVID-19 pandemic was how Britain's open spaces became so inundated with visitors, although most people were respectful when they visited, a minority created significant issues with dangerous parking, leaving huge amounts of litter and Spontaneous Social Gatherings.

The national media shone a spotlight on these issues, and Epping Forest featured strongly in this coverage.

The press took the quote from the Epping Forest Facebook account 'This ancient woodland is not a dustbin' and the photographs of litter left at High Beach following a Spontaneous Social Gathering were shared widely across the national media.

Financial statement

Our income consists of numerous sources:

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant (£8k) – Successful grant application to cover portions of wage costs of those staff in roles furloughed as a result of coronavirus pandemic.

Government grants (£176k) – Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme and Entry Level Scheme grants and other similar stewardship grant funding.

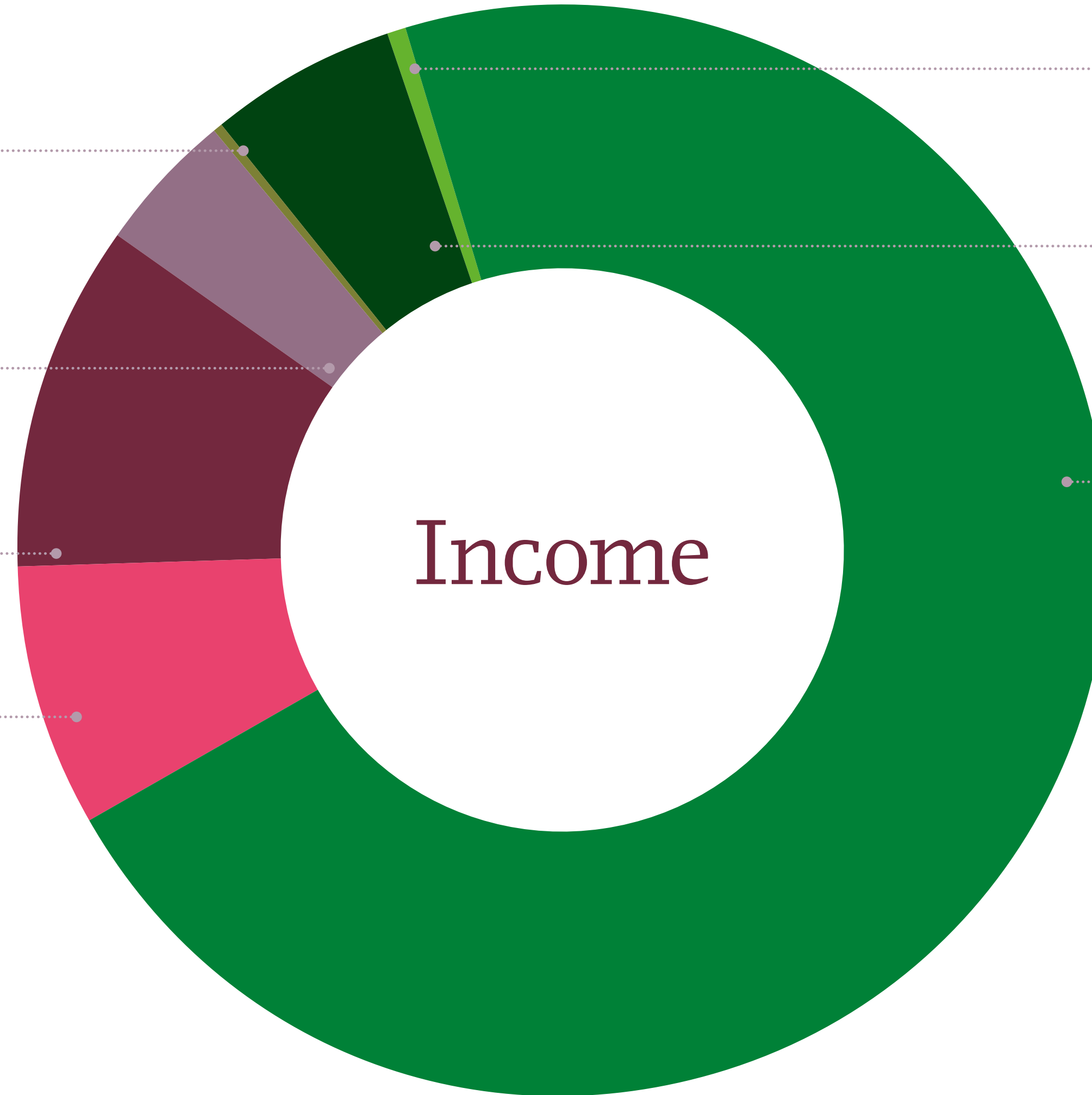
Rents, tithes, acknowledgements and wayleaves (£427k) – rental income from tenants plus wayleaves and easements.

Sports Income (£320k) – (no income received in 20/21 for football pitch hire due to COVID-19).

Contributions from other local authorities (£13k) – a small contribution towards shared services such as public toilets.

Retail sales and other service fees and charges (£240k) – this includes income generated through goods sold, event licences, weddings, horse riding licences and other use of land and premises.

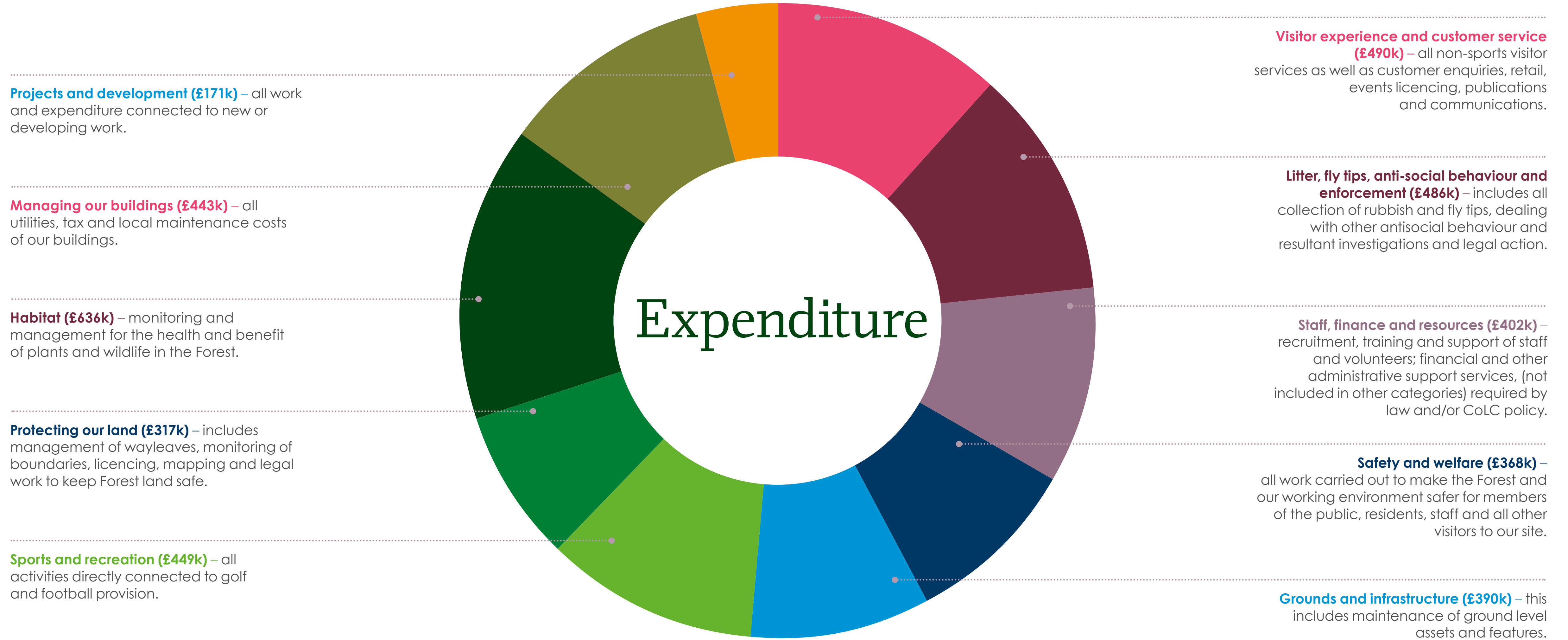
City of London contribution (£2,698k) – this comes from City's Cash, from the CoLC own funds, not from direct taxation and central funding to support our apprenticeship posts.



Income

In addition, Epping Forest is supported by numerous internal departments including HR, Finance, IS, property and legal services. Further funding is provided by the City for recharge of these services.

Financial Statement continued



Long-tailed tit

Key goals for 2021-2022

Key goals for 2021/2022

Strategic Priorities	Strategic output document	Lead management team	Supporting Team/s	Completion Date
1, 2, 4, 5	Our Sustainable Visitor Strategy will outline how we balance the forecasted growth in visitor numbers with the conservation needs of the Forest, outline methodology for managing where visitors will go, what we deliver to visitors when they get there and how behaviours will be influenced in order to maintain excellent visitor experience. This will be the umbrella strategy for the following:	Visitor Services	Operations	Autumn 2020
1, 3	Signage Strategy	Visitor Services	Operations	Summer 2021
2	Spatial Master Plan for Forest and Buffer Lands Car Park Spatial Strategy	Visitor Services	Conservation	Autumn 2021
1, 3, 5	Car Park Strategy	Visitor Services	Forest Services	September 2021
1, 3	Forest Furniture Standard	Operations	Visitor Services	June 2021
1, 3, 4, 5	'Pop up' information and visitor hubs, and volunteer/ambassador schemes <i>There is a need for the Visitor Services strategy to inform our input into local/competent authority SAC Mitigation Strategy, Green Infrastructure and SANGS Strategies*. In turn these strategies will inform future Individual Site Plans.</i>	Visitor Services	Forest Services	Summer 2021
1, 2, 5	Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan	Forest Services	Operations, Resources, Visitor Services & Conservation	2021
1, 2, 3, 5	Litter and Waste Management Plan	Forest Services	Operations & Visitor Services	2021
5	The Business Resilience Plan will ensure employees are equipped with the correct skills and response training, that we work effectively with partner organisations and that our operations are resilient at times of crisis.	Resources	All	2021
1, 2, 3, 5	The SAC Mitigation Framework* outlines how we intend to work with the competent authorities and Natural England to ensure the protection of the Forest from Local Plan-led development and other external pressures. It will be an umbrella document for the following:	Conservation	Superintendent, Visitor Services, External competent authorities, consultants and Natural England	2021
1, 2	Monitoring Strategy (SAMM) including outline costings of on-site Forest-wide measures.			2021

Key Goals for 2021/2022

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Output Document	Lead management team	Supporting Team/s	Completion Date
2, 4	Grassland & Heathland Gazetteer			2021
2	Scarce Species Register update	Conservation	Operations, consultants, external agencies, including but not limited to Forestry Commission and Natural England	2021
	Biosecurity Policy			2021
1, 4	The Estate Management Plan will outline how we will resource and care for the infrastructure in the Forest. This includes the statutory duties of tree safety works, highway verge maintenance, path development and maintenance and large raised reservoir management. This will also include the portfolio of buildings working with our colleagues in City Surveyors. (Asset Management Plan).	Resources and Operations	Conservation City Surveyors	June 2021
1, 3, 4	Integrated Site Plans Buffer Lands Chingford Hub	Operations	All	September 2021 March 2021
2, 4	Parkland Management Plan (Copped Hall)	Conservation	All	March 2021
5	Our Risk Management Framework will outline the major risks that apply to Epping Forest Charity (no. 232990) and how we can mitigate against them.	Resources	All	2021
5	A Talent Management Strategy will ensure staff and volunteers have the required skills, experience and expertise to successfully deliver the London's Great Forest Strategy over the next decade, and beyond. Volunteer development.	Resources		2021

Below: Countryfile visits Epping Forest



Case study

Countryfile

In May 2020, towards the end of the initial lockdown, a scaled-down crew from Countryfile visited Epping Forest to film for the day. The show featured the unique, ancient woodland and focussed on the grazing of English longhorn cows and how Epping Forest has pioneered new, fenceless grazing technology, using GPS and invisible fencing systems. The Superintendent of Epping Forest was interviewed about the history of the Forest. Later on, as it got dark, the Countryfile team stayed to observe the night-time activity of newts in one of the Epping Forest ponds.



Epping Forest Annual Review

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